



Sports Nutrition

Sports Medicine Systems, Inc.

Nancy Clark, MS, RD

FOODS HIGHEST IN CARBOHYDRATES

For better health and sports performance, you should choose wholesome, carbohydrate-rich foods for both your daily training diet and for pre-competition meals. Here are some suggestions:

Spaghetti, macaroni, noodles

Top the pasta with tomato sauce to add more carbohydrates. Be cautious of sauces made with lots of oil, meat, butter or cheese that contribute to "fat loading" rather than carbo-loading.

Rice

Steamed or boiled rice is preferable to Chinese fried rice which is saturated with oil and fat-calories. When possible, choose brown rice; it has more nutritional value than white rice.

Potato, sweet potato, yams

Limit fatty french fries but enjoy potatoes that are baked, boiled or mashed. Add moistness to a baked potato by mashing it with milk or topping it with plain yogurt in place of sour cream, butter or gravy.

Stuffing

A tasty, carbohydrate-rich change from pasta and potato. Store-bought stuffings are very quick and easy to prepare: just add hot water, and, if desired, some raisins and diced apples for extra carbohydrates.

Cous-cous, millet, bulgar, kasha, barley

Wholesome alternatives to the standard dinner starches. A creative addition to meals and casseroles.

Dried beans, lentils, peas

Chili beans, split pea soup, lentils, refried beans, baked beans, limas and other beans are excellent sources of both carbohydrates and protein. Caution: Large portions may lead to digestive problems!

Bread, rolls, tortillas

Try to choose hearty, whole grain products made from whole wheat, oatmeal, rye and corn in order to get more fiber and nutritional value than offered by refined, white flour products. Add butter sparingly, if at all, to breads so that you fill-up on carbohydrates and not the butter (fat).

Pretzels, air-popped popcorn, lowfat crackers

These low-fat snacks are preferable to greasy potato and corn chips. Stoned wheat crackers, Ry-Krisp and other wholesome, low-fat or fat-free brands are preferable to Ritz, Wheat Thins, Triscuits and other crackers that contain significant amounts of oil and leave you with greasy finger-tips.

When making popcorn, use an air-popper or else pop the kernels in very little oil. Commercially bagged popcorn or the brands designed for micro-wave ovens generally contain at least half of the calories from fat. Even the "lite" brands can be deceptively high in fat and relatively low in carbohydrates.

Hot cereal

Whole grain cereals such as oatmeal, Wheatena and Maltex offer wholesome goodness. Cream of Wheat, although refined, is enriched with iron. Mix cereals (i.e. cook Wheatena with Cream of Wheat) or alternate brands throughout the week in order to boost your nutrient intake. Add raisins, banana, dried fruit, brown sugar or maple syrup for extra carbohydrates. Oatmeal and oatbran are particularly healthful choices; they may help lower blood cholesterol and protect against heart disease.

Cold cereal

Rather than puffed or flake-type cereals, choose the dense-types such as Grapenuts, Wheat Chex, Raisin Bran, Bran Flakes or lowfat granolas. Fiber-rich brands can help protect against constipation. Add extra carbohydrates by topping the cereal with bananas, raisins and other fruits. Drink with orange juice to enhance iron absorption from the iron-enriched brands such as Total, Wheat Chex, Wheaties, Raisin Bran.